

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF VICTIM SERVICES MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 7, 2010

Anne Arundel County Police Department Headquarters

ATTENDEES

Board Members: Barbara Bond, Walter T. Coryell, Jessica Dickerson, Cortney Fisher, Linda Fleischer, Rea Goldfinger, Patricia Marshall, Kathleen O'Brien, Margery Patten, Johnny Rice, II, Roberta Roper, Bonnita Spikes, Debra Tall, Deborah Unitus, Mary-Ann Burkhart for Frank R. Weathersbee, Virginia Wolf and Jeanne Yeager

Staff: Shirley Haas, Anne Litecky and Nakita Long

Guests: Jennie Boden, Michael Cohen, Antoinetta "Tina" Gauth, Jane Henderson, Annette March-Grier and Elaine Moore.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION: Roberta Roper began the meeting at approximately 10:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- ❖ Motion: To Approve Minutes of March 3, 2010 and May 5, 2010 Board Meetings
- ❖ Vote: Seconded and unanimously approved
- ❖ Resolved: The minutes of the March 3, 2010 meeting are approved as corrected.

PRESENTATIONS

- ❖ Crime Victim Notification Request and Demand for Rights Form
 - Joey Cravath, Victim Services Coordinator, for the Maryland Division of Parole and Probation (DPP) presented on issues involving the current manner in which the Crime Victim Notification Request and Demand for Rights Form is processed. DPP's Office of Victim Services (OVS), in an effort to comply with the Governor's Initiative, "Reduce Violent Crimes Committed Against Women and Children by 25% by End 2012", created new workgroups to reform policies and procedures, and review the existing notification process.
 - Issues - DPP found that victims in the District Court are disenfranchised and do not always receive CVNR forms. Also, DPP is consistently not receiving the green copy from Circuit Court as mandated by law.
 - Possible solutions- DPP's Office of Victim Services suggests revising the manner in which the Crime Victim Notification Request Form is processed and/or extend VINE with the Appriss "CHOICE" notification program. GOCCP has a pending SAVIN Application to, in many respects, resolve the problem.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

- ❖ Roberta's House
 - Annette March-Grier provided an update on Roberta's House, a family grief support program for adults and children in the community who have experienced the death of a loved one.
 - January 2009 was the kickoff for Roberta's House. The program held three ten week sessions and four adult sessions in the first year, servicing approximately 32 families.
 - In 2010, the program received an earmark from Senator Cardin's Office which assisted them with identifying a center and hiring staff.
 - The program is located on East North Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland.
 - Professional staff includes a licensed social worker, a registered nurse and a pastor. There is also a volunteer staff of approximately 120 persons. Volunteers attend a twenty-six hour training and facilitate art, drama and other programs with children.
 - Camp Erin – The Moyer Foundation provided a grant to Roberta's House to bring Camp Erin to Baltimore. Joey Moyer of the Philadelphia baseball league has 36 camps for children nationwide. Baltimore is the 2nd urban camp. The grant provides funding to take 50 children to a 3 day weekend

camp at Northbay in Northeast, Maryland. The grant is for ten years, however it is not a full grant and some of the cost must be subsidized.

- Save the Date- Roberta's House along with University of Maryland, is hosting a "Family Conference for Homicide Survivors: A Day of Healing on Saturday, September 11, 2010 from 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M. at the Carl J. Murphy Fine Arts Building, Morgan State University, 1700 E. Coldspring Lane, Baltimore, Maryland. The agenda will consist of panelists, a keynote speaker and breakout sessions. Printed material has not officially been circulated because they are awaiting confirmation from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) regarding grant funding. Annette also asked Board members to circulate the Speaker Request Form to any persons who may be interested in participating in this event.

❖ MCASA's Perspective on Next Steps in Baltimore City

- Jennie Boden, Executive Director of MCASA, addressed recent newspaper articles from the Baltimore Sun regarding rape cases in Baltimore City.
 - MCASA was pleased that the newspaper article brought to light issues involving unfounded and shelved rape cases in Baltimore City.
 - Baltimore City has announced a new hotline for survivors who have been sexually assaulted in the past and either reported the assault or did not report it based on their prior experience with the police department and the investigators. There were over 25 calls received on the hotline the first day.
 - MCASA, Turn Around and other agencies are hopeful that the media exposure will provide public awareness and a clearer understanding of victim rights surrounding rape and sexual assault and that some national or statewide best practices can be established based on the work that is being done in Baltimore City.
- There was a discussion regarding the dismissal of rape cases being exclusive to Baltimore or if there was a common problem in other police departments. Jennie advised that this a national issue but there is a particular problem in Baltimore City.
- Cortney Fisher, Executive Director of Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (CICB) reported that there were two claims submitted for rape last fiscal year in Baltimore City. She advised Jennie that sexual assault victims who file a police report for the purposes of criminal injuries compensation are eligible and CICB is reaching out to MCASA and SART teams to make them aware that CICB is an available option.

❖ Crisis Response Team (CRT) Training

- Debra Tall reported on the three-day National Crisis Response Training she attended which offered group crisis intervention and provided information regarding the trauma experience and physiological responses to trauma. The training covered topics dealing with death notification, loss and grief, and cultural and religious issues related to death and grief.
- The last CRT training held in Maryland was in 2003. Debra and other members of the Board expressed an interest in having this training brought back to Maryland.
- Anne Litecky advised the Board that Debra Stanley is working with NOVA and scheduling the CRT training for Maryland through the Roper Victim Assistance Academy for the remainder of 2010 through 2011. Anne will email dates for the advanced trainings when the schedule is complete.

❖ MD Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (CICB)

- OVC Opinion on question of immigration and CICB benefits
 - Cortney Fisher provided the Board with an update regarding OVC's opinion on the question of immigration and CICB benefits. OVC has rendered an opinion that denying compensation benefits because persons do not have documentation of their immigration status or even

requesting information about a person's immigration status is not legal and can be considered a civil rights violation.

- There should be no request for social security numbers and citizenship status and Cortney asked to be informed if social security numbers and/or citizenship statuses are being requested.
- Board members inquired if record checks are being done on victims who file compensation claims. Cortney advised that claims examiners are not doing record checks for victims who file a claim for compensation and CICB's Deputy Secretary is contemplating disabling Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) access for claims examiners.

➤ Staffing

- Nikki Charles was recently hired as the Administrator of Victim Services Operations. She began working in her position on July 1, 2010.
- CICB presently has only six examiners and according to the Department of Budget and Management, CICB cannot recruit or hire examiners until the classifications for those positions are approved.
- Revenue Recovery Specialist, Jose Vasquez, had emergency surgery and more than one heart attack over the weekend. His status is unknown.
- CICB Staff Policies and Procedures are complete and in effect. The goal is to turn around a claim within 75 days. The current processing turn around time is 141 days which is down from 163 days. Domestic violence cases take an average of 325 days to process a claim and sexual assault claims are really low. Cortney intends to meet with domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse communities for input regarding how CICB could better serve victims in those communities.

➤ Budget

- CICB is not exempt from interest bearing accounts as previously thought by CICB. As a result, CICB will be receiving \$629,000 in retroactive interest.
- In the past, CICB money was not being managed to maximize funds. State funds were not being paid out prior to paying out federal funds and as a result CICB was not receiving the reimbursement they should have been receiving from the federal government.
- CICB will continue receiving federal and state funds. There has been concern about whether CICB's allotment is sufficient to cover the amount of claims. State funds come from Circuit Court Fees, District Court fees and traffic. CICB's reserve is running down and they need to find a way to recover more revenue and/or increase court fees and/or add court fees onto peace/protective orders and increase traffic fees.

❖ State Board Retreat Planning

- The Maryland State Board of Victim Services has not had a Retreat since 2007. Debra Tall expressed an interest in the Board conducting yearly Retreats to discuss ideas for trainings, projects and yearly activities and have one-day trainings to keep the Board updated on a variety of topics.
- Jeanne Yeager recommended and the Board agreed to wait until after the Town Hall listening events to schedule Retreats as listening to the victims speak about their experiences could potentially drive the Board's agenda.
- Roberta suggested the Board think of topics for the Retreat.
- A motion was made and seconded and the Board unanimously voted to recommend to Kristen that the Board hold a retreat in the next year.

❖ Board Member Victim Related Updates/Reporting Out

- A motion was made to have Board members report out at the Board meetings on updates from their area(s) of expertise or things that are happening in their community on a rotational schedule.

- The Board unanimously agreed to participate in reporting out and Jeanne Yeager agreed to report out in September on the Town Hall Meeting.
- ❖ State Board Meeting Minutes
 - Members of the Board discussed the current manner in which the minutes are written. While it was agreed that the minutes have become rather lengthy and should be condensed and that personal quotes and personal identification should be avoided except to show support or opposition, no consensus was made on the exact manner in which the minutes should be written. There was also disagreement regarding animating and editorializing the minutes by using words like “long and lively.” Nakita Long was advised to review the Standards of Excellence and Robert’s Rules of Order and report back to the Board on her findings.
- ❖ Eastern-Shore Town Hall Meeting
 - Jeanne Yeager will be hosting the first Town Hall Meeting to be held Thursday, July 15, 2010 from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM at Salisbury University. The Town Hall will be an open forum for crime victims, service providers and/or other criminal justice agency members to voice their opinions and concerns about crime victimization and services. Jessica Dickerson will be a panelist member. Margery Patton, Debbie Tall, Roberta Roper, Anne Litecky, Nakita Long will be in attendance. Bill Toohey, Public Information Officer for GOCCP, is putting information out to radio stations and local newspapers regarding the Town Hall Meeting. Jeanne Yeager is also getting the word out.
 - Other Town Hall Meetings – A Town Hall will also be held in the metro region (Howard County) in August and in the Western region (Washington or Frederick County) in September. After inquiry was made about having a meeting in the Southern region, Kathleen O’Brien suggested that she could sponsor a Town Hall in the southern region. Anne Litecky will discuss this with Kristen Mahoney and advise the Board of Kristen’s decision.
- ❖ MVOC Grant Award Report
 - Nakita Long reported out for Frank Weathersbee, Grant Review Committee Chair, on FY 2011 MVOC Grant Awards. The Grant Review Committee met in March 2010, to review first year MVOC and LSCV grants. The Committee reviewed 36 first year MVOC grants and recommended funding for 14 of the 36 grants, awarding funds totaling \$325,000. Three LSCV grant applications were received and one was funded in the amount of \$50,000. In May 2010, the Committee met and reviewed 24 MVOC continuation grants (13 second year and 11 third year). Second year MVOC funding totaled \$288, 216 and third year funding totaled \$144,217.
- ❖ 2010 Memorial Service and Luncheon MVOC Fiscal Report
 - Anne Litecky reported out on the 2010 Memorial Service and Governors Luccheon budget.
 - Governor’s Luncheon - Club Meade was budgeted for \$4,800. The invoice total was \$3,410.20. Collection totaled \$3,840. Due to the costs of the awards, Art Comp, printing and mailing tickets, band donation and the keynote speaker, it cost the MVOC \$1612, 00 to have the Governor’s Victim Assistance Awards Luncheon this year.
 - Memorial Service – Each host received \$1000. Art Comp cost was \$500 for the design of invitations, programs and bookmarks. The budgeted amount \$8,576. MVOC was under the budgeted amount for memorial services this year by \$740.
- ❖ Victim Information Notification Everyday (VINE)
 - The VINE contract has been consolidated and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services will manage the Appriss contract. Questions and concerns regarding VINE will still be addressed to Anne; however Anne will refer all IT related questions to DPSCS’s Information and Technology Communications Division (ITCD). Troubleshooting for Courts and Custody, Parole

and Probation, Sex Offender Alert Line and VOP- Protective Order Notification System will be done by DPSCS.

- Baltimore City campaign was extended into June without the approval of GOCCP at the cost of \$28,730. APPRISS and the vendor are working out an agreement.
- VINE materials are being revised and email notification PIN will be added to VINE. This is email confirmation that a victim has received an email notification.

❖ Roper Victim Assistance Academy of Maryland (RVAAM)

- Anne reported that the Roper Victim Assistance Academy this year was a huge success. There were 34 participants representing 11 Maryland counties, Washington, D.C. and 2 people from Louisiana. 81% were female. Anne encouraged Board members to coordinate any training they are doing with RVAAM.

❖ Prince George's County Police Department

- Major Elaine Moore reported that Prince George's County Police Department has partnered with community advocates for family and youth in Prince George's County who were already doing a limited amount of victim services within the Criminal Investigations Division (CID). They have now expanded to all crimes in the CID. They have trained volunteer victim advocates and they are in District I (Hyattsville), District II (Bowie) and District V (Clinton). The goal is to have volunteer victim advocates in the three remaining districts by the end of the year.
- Elaine created a power point on victims rights and law enforcement's responsibilities and all 1500 police officers are receiving information through their in-service training.
- Major Elaine Moore's contact information is 240-832-3006 (cell) and email is eamoore@co.pg.md.us.

❖ Save the Date

- The Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center's (MCVRC) Annual Awards Ceremony and Fundraiser will be held at the Fraternal Order of Police #89 in Upper Marlboro, Maryland on October 15, 2010.

**The next Board meeting will be held at Anne Arundel Police Department Headquarters
on
Wednesday, September 1, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.**